

THE CLUB-HOUSE.

Alluring and Dangerous Dispositions Found Within It.

Neglected Homes and Cold and Cheerless Firesides—The Only Remedy—A Sermon by Rev. Dr. W. H. Witt, Talmage, D. D.

The subject of a recent sermon by Dr. Talmage in Brooklyn Tabernacle, was: "What is the Influence of Club-Houses in American Cities?" The text was Luke vi, 44: "Every tree is known by its own fruit." Dr. Talmage said:

Fall pippins do not grow on a crab-apple tree. Choicest pears are not found in an orchard of Bartlett's. Christ laid down this principle, and it is always and everywhere applicable. If you want to find whether an institution is good or bad you have only to examine the kind of character it produces. I remember in my father's orchard there was a large apple tree that yielded luscious fruit, but it had a hollow trunk, so that we boys could hide in it. Which was the best position from which to examine the fruit of that tree, in the trunk where we sometimes used to hide or standing outside looking up at the fruit? "Well," you say, "standing on the outside looking at it." And so I really believe that those inside any institution are less competent to judge of its tendencies than those who are standing outside and watching the products perpetually shaken down.

I am asked what is the influence of the club-houses of this country? To the answering of this question I give this discourse. Men are gregarious. Cattle herd. Fish in schools. Birds in flocks. Men in social circles. You may by the discharge of a gun scatter a flock of quail, or by the plume of the anchor send apart the denizens of the sea; but they will gather themselves together again. If you, by some new power, could break the associations in which men now stand they would again adhere. God meant it so. In consequence of this tendency we find men coming together in tribes, in communities, in churches, in societies. Some gather together to cultivate the arts; some to plan for the welfare of the State; some to discuss religious themes; some to kindle their mirth; some to advance their craft. No every active community is divided into associations of artists, of merchants, of book-binders, of carpenters, of masons, of plasterers, of shipwrights, of plumbers. Do you cry out against it? Then you cry out against a tendency divinely implanted. Your tirades will accomplish no more than if you should preach to a busy ant-hill or beehive a long sermon against secret societies.

A BRIGHT PICTURE.

What an imperial hall-way! Seal here are parlors on this side with the upholstery of the Kremlin and the Tulleries, and here are dining halls that challenge you to mention any luxury that they can not afford; and here are galleries with sculpture and paintings and lithographs and drawings from the best of artists—Crown and Imperial and Church and Hall and Guild—pictures for every mood, whether you are pious or proud; shipwreck or sunlight over the sea, Sheridan's ride or the noonday party of the fa-mers under the trees; foaming deer pursued by the hounds in the Adirondacks or the sheep on the lawn. On this side there are reading-rooms, where you find all newspapers and magazines. On that side there is a library, where you find all books from hermetics to the fairy tale. Coming in and out there are gentlemen, some of whom stay ten minutes, others stay many hours. Some of these are from luxurious homes, and have exhaled themselves for awhile from the domestic circle that they may enjoy the larger sociability of the club-house. There are some from dissipated households, and they have a plain looking somewhere in their eyes to this club-house to have their club enjoyment. One black-tail and ten tails will defeat a man's incoming a member. For rowdiness, for drunkenness, for gambling, for any kind of misdemeanor a member is dropped out. Brilliant club-houses from top to bottom. The chandeliers, the plate, the furniture, the companionship, the literature, the social prestige—a complete enchantment.

A DARK PICTURE.

Another Club-house: Opening the door, we find the fumes of strong drink and tobacco something almost intolerable. These young men at this table—it is easy to understand what they are at from the flushed cheek, the intent look, the almost angry way of tossing the dice or of moving the "chips." They are gambling. At another table are men who are telling vile stories. They are three-fourths intoxicated, and between twelve and one o'clock they will go staggering, boozing, swearing, shouting, on their way home. That is an only son. On him all kindness, all care, all culture, have been bestowed. He is paying his parents in this way for their kindness. That is a young married man who only a few months ago at the altar made promises of kindness and fidelity, every one of which he has broken. Walk through and see for yourself. Here are all the implements of dissipation and of quick death. As the hours of night go away the conversation becomes imbecile and more debasing. Now it is time to shut up. Those who are able to stand will get out on to the pavement and balance themselves against the lamp-post or against the railings of the fence. The young man who is not able to stand will have a bed improvised for him in the club-house, or two not quite so overcome with liquor will conduct him to his father's house, and they will ring the door-bell and the door will open, and the two imbecile escorts will introduce into the hallway the ghastliest and most hellish spectacle that ever enters a front door—a drunken son. If the dissipated club-houses of this country would make a contract with the Inferno to provide it ten thousand men a year for twenty years on the condition that no more should be asked of them, the Club-houses could afford to make that contract, for they would save households, save fortunes, save bodies, minds and souls. The ten thousand men would be sacrificed by that contract would be but a small part of the multitude sacrificed without the contract.

THREE TESTS.

If God will help me, I will lay down three principles by which you may judge whether the club where you are a member or the club to which you have been invited is a legitimate or an illegitimate Club-house.

First of all, I want you to test the club by its influence on home, if you have a home. I have been told by a prominent gentleman in club life, three-fourths of the members of the great clubs of these cities are married men. That wife soon loses her influence over her husband and nervously and foolishly looks upon evening absence as an assault on domesticity. How are the great enterprises of art and literature and beneficence and public work to be carried on if every man is to have his world bounded on one side by his front door-step and on the other by his back window, knowing nothing higher than his own cellar? That wife who becomes jealous of her husband's attention to art or literature, or religion, or charity, is breaking her own scepter of conjugal power.

er. I know in this church an instance where a wife thought that her husband was giving too many nights to Christian service, to charitable service, to prayer-meetings and to religious convocations. She systematically deceived him away, until now he attends neither to any church, and is on a rapid way to destruction; his morals gone, his money gone, and, I fear, his soul gone. Let any Christian wife rejoice when her husband consecrates evenings to the service of God, or to charity, or to art, or to anything elevated; but let not men sacrifice home life to club life. I have the rolls of the members of a great many of the prominent clubs of these cities, and I can point out to you a great many names of men who are guilty of this sacrilege. They are as genial as angels at the Club-house and as ugly as sin at home. They are generous on all subjects of wine-suppers, yachts and fast horses, but they are stingy about the wife's dress and the children's shoes. That man has made that which might be a healthful recreation a usurper of his affections, and he has married it, and he is guilty of moral bigamy. Under this process the wife, whatever her features, becomes uninteresting and homely. He becomes critical of her, does not like her dress, does not like the way she arranges her hair, is amazed that he ever was so unromantic as to offer her hand and heart. She is always wanting money, money, money, when she ought to be discussing Dexter and Derby Day, and English drags with six horses, all answering the pull of one "ribbon."

I tell you there are thousands of houses in Brooklyn and New York being clubbed to death! There are Club-houses in these cities where membership always involves domestic shipwreck. Tell me that a man has joined a certain club; tell me nothing more about him for ten years and I will write his history if he be still alive. The man is a wine-guzzler, his wife broken-hearted or prematurely old, his fortune gone or reduced, and his home a mere name in the directory. Here are six secular nights in the week. "What shall I do with them?" says the father and the husband. "I will give four of those nights to the improvement and entertainment of my family either at home or in good neighborhood; I will devote one to charitable institutions; I will devote one to the club." I congratulate you. Here is a man who says: "I will make a different division of the six nights. I will take three for the club and three for other purposes." I tremble. Here is a man who says: "Out of the six secular nights of the week I will devote five to the Club-house and one to the home, which night I will spend in scowling like a March squall, wishing I was out spending it as I had spent the other five." That man's obituary is written. Not one out of ten thousand that ever gets so far on the wrong road ever stops. Gradually his health will fail through late hours and through too much stimulants. He will be first-rate prey for erysipelas and rheumatism of the heart. The doctor coming in will at a glance see it is not only present disease he must fight, but years of fast living. The clergyman, for the sake of the feelings of the family on the funeral day, will only talk in religious generalities. The men who got his yacht in the eternal rapids will not be at the obsequies. They will have pressing engagements that day. They will send flowers to the coffin and send their wives to utter words of sympathy, but they will have engagements elsewhere. They never come. Bring me mallet and chisel and I will cut on the tombstone that man's epitaph: "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord." "No," you say, "that would not be appropriate." "Let me do the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his." "No," you say, "that would not be appropriate." Then give me the mallet and chisel, and I will cut an honest epitaph: "Here lies the victim of a dissipated Club-house." I think that damage is often done by the actions of some aristocratic family, who belong to one of these dissipated Club-houses. People coming up from humble classes feel it an honor to belong to the same club, forgetting the fact that many of the sons and grandsons of the large commercial establishments of the last generation are now, as to mind, imbecile, as to body, diseased; as to morals, rotten.

Another test by which you can find whether your club is legitimate or illegitimate—the effect it has on your secular occupation. I can understand how through such an institution a man can reach commercial success. I know some men have formed their best business relations through such a channel. If the club has advanced you in an honorable calling it is a legitimate club. But has your credit failed? Are bargain makers more cautious how they trust you with a bill of goods? Have the men whose names were down in the commercial agency at before they entered the club been going down since in commercial standing? Then look out. You and I every day know of commercial establishments going to ruin through the social excesses of one or two members. Their fortunes beaten to death with ball-player's bat, or cut amid ships by the front prow of the regatta, or going down under the swift hoofs of the fast horses, or drowned in large potatoes of cognac or Monongahela. Their Club-house was the "Loch Earn." Their business was the "Ville du Havre." They struck and the "Ville du Havre" went under.

A third test by which you may know whether the club to which you belong, or the club to whose membership you are invited, is a legitimate club or an illegitimate club, is this: What is its effect on your sense of moral and religious obligation? Now, if I should take the names of all the people in this audience this morning and put them on a roll, and then I should say that roll back of the organ, and a hundred years from now some one should take that roll and call it from A to Z there would not be one of you answer. I say that any association that makes me forget that fact is a bad association. When I go to Chicago I am sometimes perplexed at Buffalo, as I suppose many travelers are, as to whether it is better to take the Lake Shore route or the Michigan Central, equally expeditions and equally safe, getting at the destination at the same time. But suppose that I hear that on one route the track is torn up, and the bridges are torn down, and the switches are unlocked? It will not take me a great while to decide which road to take. Now here we have two roads into the future, the Christian and the unchristian, the safe and the unsafe. Any institution or any association that confuses my idea in regard to that fact is a bad institution and a bad association.

I had prayers before I joined the club. Did I have them after? I attended the house of God before I connected myself with the club. Since that union with the club do I absent myself from religious influences? Which would you rather have in your head when you come to die, a pack of cards or a Bible? Which would you rather have pressed to your lips in the closing moment, the cup of Belshazzar's wassail or the chalice of Christian communion? Who would you rather have for your pall-bearers, the elders of a Christian church, or the companions whose conversation was full of slang and innuendo? Who would you rather have for your eternal companions, those men who spend the evening betting, gambling, swearing, carousing and telling vile stories, or your little child, that bright

girl whom the Lord took? Oh, you would not have been away so much nights, would you, if you had known she was going away so soon? Dear me, your house has never been the same since. Your wife has never brightened up. She has not got over it; she never will get over it.

GOOD MEN WRECKED.

I deplore this ruin the more because this style of dissipation is taking down our finest men. The admission fee lifts out the penniless and takes only those who are called the "fellows." Oh, how changed you are! Not so kind to your wife as you used to be, not so patient with your children, your conscience is not so much at rest. You laugh more now and sing louder than once, but you are not half so happy. It is not the public drinking saloon that is taking you down, but it is simply and undeniably your Club-room. You do not make yourself as agreeable in your family as once. You go home at twelve o'clock with an unnatural flush upon your cheek and a strange color in your eyes that you got at the club. You merely acknowledge that you feel queer. You say that champagne never intoxicates; that it only exhilarates, makes the conversation fluent, shakes up the humor, and has no bad effect except a headache next day. But not deceived. Champagne may not, like whiskey, throw a man under the table, but if, through any thing you drink you gain an unnatural fluency of speech and glow of feeling, you are simply drunk. If those imperious weariless young men—society young men—I would not be so sorry as I am; but there are many of them generous to a fault, frank, honest, cheerful, talented. I begrudge the devil such a prize. After awhile these persons will lose all the frankness and honor for which they are now distinguished. Their countenances will get haggard, and, instead of looking one in the eye when they talk, they will look down. After awhile, when the mother kindly asks: "What kept you so late?" they will make no answer, or will say: "That is my business!" They will come cross and belligerent to the store and bank, and ever and anon neglect some duty, and after awhile will be dismissed; and then, with nothing to do, will rise in the morning at ten o'clock, cursing the servant because the breakfast is cold, and then go down town and stand on the steps of a fashionable hotel and criticize the passers-by. While the young man who was a clerk in a collar has come up to be a cashier, and thousands of other young men of the city have gone up to higher and more responsible positions, he has been going down until there he passes through the street with bloated lips and bloodshot eyes and staggering step, and hat mud-spattered and set sideways on a shock of greasy hair, the ashes of his cigar dashed upon his cravat. Here he goes! Look at him, all ye pure-hearted young men, and see the work of the dissipated Club-room. I know one such who after the contaminations of his Club-house leaped out of the third-story window to put an end to his wretchedness.

O, men who are victims of dissipated associations, your sins will follow you! I describe the history of thousands of households when I say that the tea is rapidly taken and while yet the family linger, the father shores back his chair, has "an engagement," lights his cigar and starts out, not returning until after midnight. That is the history of three hundred and sixty-five days in the year, except when he is sick and can not go out. How about home duties? Have you fulfilled all your vows? Would your wife ever have married you with such a prospect? Wait until your sons get to be sixteen or seventeen years of age and they, too, will show back from the tea-table, have "an engagement," light their cigars, go over to their Club-house, their night-joy rattling in your door after midnight—the effect of your example.

Beware.

A revolving Drummond light on the front of a locomotive casts its gleam through the darkness as it is turned around. So I catch up the lamp of God's truth and turn it round until its beams of glory flash into all the Club-houses of our cities. The presence of dissipated Club-houses. "Paid your money?" Sacrifice that rather than your soul. "Good fellows," are they? They can not stay what they are under such influences. Molasses live two hundred fathoms down in the Norwegian seas. The Siberian stag grows fat on the stunted growth of Altaiian peaks. The hysler am thrives amid the desolation of Sahara. Tufts of osier and birch grow on the hot lips of volcanic Schneehalton. But good character and useful life thrive amid Club-room dissipation never! The best way to make a wild beast cower is to look him in the eye; but the best way to treat the temptations I have described is to turn your back and fly! Oh, my heart aches! I see men struggling to get out of the serfdom of bad habits, and I want to help them. I have knelt with them and heard their cry for help. I have had them put one hand on each of my shoulders and look me in the eye with earnestness that the judgment shall have no power to make me forget, and from their lips, scorched with the fires of ruin, have heard them cry: "God help me!" There is no rescue for such save in the Lord Almighty.

An End to Bone Scraping.

Edward Shepherd, of Harrisburg, Ill., says: "Having received so much benefit from Electric Bitters, I feel it my duty to let suffering humanity know it. I have had a running sore on my leg for eight years; my doctors told me I would have to have the bone scraped or leg amputated. I used, instead, three bottles of Electric Bitters and seven boxes Bucklen's Arnica Salve, and my leg is now sound and well."

Electric Bitters are sold at fifty cents a bottle, and Bucklen's Arnica Salve at 25c. per box by Durbin, Wright & Co.

TRYING to put back upon British soil Chinamen who had come into the United States in violation of the Restriction act, a customs officer on the Northwestern frontier has been confronted with a Canadian statute which provides that a fee of \$50 per capita shall be paid for Chinese readmitted to the Dominion. A novel situation has resulted, and the State Department is wrestling with the peculiar international questions involved.

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A STATE convention of colored men was held at Lynchburg, Virginia, on the 30th. An address was adopted renouncing their allegiance to the Republican party, and thanking the present National administration for its liberality toward the colored people of the South.

REN. H. B. EMBELL, of Pavilion, N. Y., says of Gilmore's Aromatic Wine: "I believe it to be a most desirable remedy to be placed in every family."

ALEXANDER I.
Prince of Bulgaria, to Which Roumelia has Annexed itself.

A Lively War in Consequence Between Russia and Turkey not Improbable.



The recent events in Roumelia and Bulgaria, in which the former revolted against the dominion of Turkey and annexed itself to Bulgaria, promise to have a very serious ending and war between Russia, the champion of Bulgaria, and Turkey is not improbable.

Alexander I, Prince of Bulgaria, is the son of Prince Alexander of Battenburg, brother of the late Empress of Russia, and was born April 5th 1877. His mother, born Countess von Kuuk, was the daughter of a former Polish Minister of War and was raised to the rank of Princess on her marriage with Prince Alexander. The Prince of Bulgaria is the second son of this union, his elder brother having entered the English Navy. Prince Alexander served, during the last Russo-Bulgarian War, in the Russian army, acting part of the time as an attaché on the staff of Prince Charles of Roumelia and also serving in an Uhlan regiment. He was present with Prince Charles at the siege of Pleven and crossed the Balkans with Gourko. Soon after returning to Germany from the campaign he was transferred from the Dragons to the Life Guards. He was elected hereditary Prince of Bulgaria, by the Assembly of Notables, at Tirnova April 29th, 1879 and by vote of the Grand National Assembly on July 13th, 1881. He was invested with extraordinary legislative powers. He was appointed an honorary Knight of the Order of the Bath in June 1879.

"Opinions are but little things," said John Wesley 135 years ago. We think that opinions which are backed by experience are substantial. The masses who use Dr. Bigelow's Positive Cure all speak highly of it for coughs, colds, whooping cough, croup, bronchitis, asthma, influenza, and all throat and lung diseases. It cures safe, speedy and permanent. Price 50 cents and one dollar; trial bottles free of Durbin, Wright & Co., Druggists.

The Supt.

of the Louisville and Jeffersonville Ferry Co., Mr. J. C. DORSEY, who lives on Wall st., Jeffersonville, Ind., suffered severely from Neuralgia in the face, and was quickly cured by ATALOPHOROS.

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